

SAMSON a Type of *Jesus Christ*
IN A
S E R M O N

PREACHED

At Mr. Pomfret's Meeting-House in Gravel-
lane near Hounds-ditch, London: At the
Morning-Lecture, on July 22. 1691.

FROM

Judg. xiv. 5. *Then went Samson down, and his Father
and his Mother, to Timnath; and came to the Vineyards
of Timnath; and Behold, a young Lion roared against him.*

WHEREIN IS SHEWED,

- I. In Six particulars, How clearly *Samson* doth Type *Jesus Christ*, viz. (1.) In his Conception and Birth. (2.) In his Education and Manner of Life. (3.) In his Work and Office. (4.) In his Manner of Warfare. (5.) In his Marriage. (6.) And lastly, In his Death. And,
- II. With respect unto *Samsons* Marriage, (treated of in the Text) like as *Samson* went down to *Timnath* a City of the *Philistines* to take a Wife: So *Jesus Christ* came down from Heaven into this sinfull World, to Redeem and Espouse his Church to himself.
- III. As *Samson* loved and married an Uncircumcised Woman, and one that belonged to the House of his Enemies the *Philistines*: So *Jesus Christ* Loved his Church when she was Uncircumcised in Heart, polluted in her Blood, and when residing in the House of his Enemies, the Fallen Nature, he took her to himself.
- IV. As *Samson* did overcome the Young Lion which opposed him: So *Jesus Christ* doth overcome and destroy that roaring Lion, the Devil, that opposeth him.

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By D. O. an unworthy Servant of Christ.

LONDON,

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To the READER.

Christian Reader,

IT hath been, and is, to all the truly Godly, in this present Age, an occasion of great Trouble and Sorrow of Heart, to see the World so exceedingly declining the Ways of God, and reducing it self into such an height of Conformity to the Will and Ways of the Devil, in this Generation; even superabounding with all manner of Sin, and abominable Wickedness, and that in such measures (to speak no further) as former Ages have been absolute strangers to: And indeed, to see this in France, Spain and Italy, where it is to be feared they very much content themselves with the very Name of Christians, being with respect to Faith and Worship, even drowned in Idolatry and Superstition, is a great pity, but not so much to be admired: But now to see this Notorious wickedness, and these unheard of sins, So much in Credit and Practice in England, I say in England, a Nation so much admired and cryed up for Learning, Piety and Gospel Light; truly this is not only much to be pitied, but also very much to be admired. And again, were but this Sin and Wickedness Thus in Credit and Practice among the Carnal and Irreligious ones, Who either profess nothing at all, or else content themselves with meer formal Worship, in the mean while Denying the Life and Power of true Godliness; then it would not seem half so strange neither: But now, that this Sin and Wickedness is as much, if not in some respects more, in Credit with, and in Practice amongst, them, that of late years have borne the Rod of Persecution for Conscience-sake: Who have not only Dissented from what they perceived in others to be too superstitious, but have separated from the Ways of the Vulgar, and have joyned themselves to the Lord, and to one another, in the strictest Sincerity and Zeal. Now I say, that this Sin and Wickedness should so easily get amongst, and be so readily entertained by these, yea by These; O this is not only an occasion of pity, but of Great Admiration and Astonishment to and amongst all truly fearing God at this day. But if any say, What sin is there amongst such? I answer, What sin is there amongst such? Nay, thou mayst rather say, What sin is there not amongst such? Yet I do not mean sins manifestly Gross and notoriously wicked; such as is Drunkenness, Whoredom, Swearing, and apparently loose Living: No, but I mean this Abominable Spirit of Pride, which certainly was scarce ever before at the height to which it is now arrived, both Externally and Internally, both in City and Countrey: For though it may be within, when it doth not manifestly appear outwardly; yet when it is so highly apparent without, there is black work within for certain.

To the Reader.

And also this excessive Covetousness, yea and that with respect unto Gospel-matters; of which (I fear I may too truly speak it) the Ministers are too highly (not to say most highly) Guilty: For Souls and Congregations are by many slighted and over-looked, where there is not that Honour, Advantage, Entertainment and Esteem which this Ambitious Age calls for. And hence it cometh to pass that the City is ready to surfeit with Superfluity, while the Countrey is almost starved for want of Supply, &c. And 'tis well if too many, who have formerly condemned others, for that, for which they were indeed highly worthy of blame, do not now themselves in this time of Liberty fall into the same snares with them: Besides, there is a spirit of Envy and Evil-will, with the which the Minds of most Professors at this Day are too highly influenced; which generally arises from a desire, which now reigns in the Hearts of most to be Great and Lordly among, if not over their Fellow-brethren; the sad Effects whereof many Congregations are too highly sensible at this day: But when Samson comes down to Timnath, viz. When Christ comes down in more Light, Life and Power by the Gospel, and amongst his People, to the overcoming and slaying of this Lion, the Devil, the grand Author of all these Troubles, then will the Trumpet of the Gospel sound a Retreat, in order to the bringing back of backsliding Sion to her first Husband: Concerning which (Reader) thou hast a short Account given thee in this ensuing Discourse; which, though it be unpolisht, wanting those learned Phrases and Terms of Art so much in use at this day, yet the Simpleness and Plainness thereof, may be Advantageous to such as are of mean Capacities; and such as are otherwise, are desired to look over the same.

And further know, that when it was preached, it was not at all designed for the Press: No, nothing less was in the Authors thoughts: But it being publickly requested before the Congregation went away, for that the People then present seemed to be very much Affected therewith; the Author was thereby engaged, together with some other reasons of the like Import, to give way to the same, not much regarding what in a way of Derision may be charged upon him for the same.

And now, Reader, that thou mayst be Benefited, and the Lord alone Exalted, is both the Design of this, and Desire of him, who remaineth a hearty Well-wisher to all the whole Israel of God,

From my Chamber (for the present) in Lawrence-lane, near Cheap-side, London,
July 28. 1691.

David Crossley.

SAMSON

SAMSON a Type of CHRIST.

JUDGES xiv. 5.

Then went Samson down, and his Father, and his Mother, to Timnath, and came to the Vinyard of Timnath; and behold a young Lion roared against him.

BELOVED, It is worth the serious Observation of all sincere Christians, to take notice, How God in days of old, (especially in the middle Age of the World) did lead his Church and People, by *Types* and *Figures*, to the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, as by him appointed to be the only Saviour of all that believe in his Name throughout all Ages.

SO that few Kings in, or Judges over *Israel*, for many hundred years together, but did in one thing or another, less or more, Typically represent Jesus Christ, in his Person, Works, or Offices; as many both then, and also since, have to their comfort and benefit observed.

AMONG whom *Samson*, of whom our Text treateth, shineth in this respect, as a Star of the first magnitude; and doth in many things as clearly (if not more clearly) Type forth Christ, than any of them all; and that in many particulars. But I shall only mention six. 1. In his Birth. 2. In his Education. 3. In his Office and Government. 4. In his manner of Warfare. 5. In his Marriage. 6. In his Death.

1st. IN his Birth, 1. In that it was foretold by *Angels*, *Judg.* 13. 3. Answerable to the Birth of Christ, *Luke* 1. 31. 2. In that it was in a time of *Israel's* so great Bondage and Captivity, *Judg.* 13. 1. So the Birth of Christ was in like manner when the Scepter was departed

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parted from Judah, and all the World came up to be taxed by *Augustus Caesar*, Luke 2. 1, 2. 3. In that it was in a time of *Israels* so great *Darkness*, Blindness and wickedness, *ch.* 13. 1. So the Birth of Christ, of whom it is said, *When he cometh, shall he find faith on earth?* Luke 18. 8. See also *Job.* 1. 10.

2^{dly}. IN his Education; in that he was a *Nazarite* unto God from the Womb, devoted to the Lord from his Birth; and that not at his Parents Discretion, as *Samuel*, 1 Sam. 1. 11. but of the Lord's own Choice, *Judg.* 13. 5.

3^{dly}. IN his Office and Government, he was, 1. To be a Deliverer to *Israel*, *Judg.* 13. 5. 2. A Judge over *Israel*, *Judg.* 16. 31. to save and defend them from the *Philistines*, who then so grievously oppressed and distressed them: accordingly as Christ was appointed and exalted of God to be a Prince and a Saviour in and over his Church, the Government whereof was and is upon his shoulders, *Isa.* 9. 6. *Act.* 5. 31. And him it is that is in the midst of her, and therefore she shall not be moved, *Psal.* 46. 5. *His tabernacle is in the midst of her, and he will surely plead her cause.* For *whosoever toucheth her, toucheth the apple of his eye*, *Zech.* 2. 8.

4^{thly}. IN his manner of Warfare; and indeed this is worth the noting, and most observeable, in that when *Samson* went to War with, or to Battle against his Adversaries; as he often did, he never gathered together Armies of Men, nor called in Assistance from the People, as did others of the Judges and Kings of *Israel*. Nay, what Judge, Prince, King, or Monarch, did we ever read or hear of, that did not so, excepting him alone? But as for him (the Spirit of the Lord first coming upon him) he always went forth in his own Person against them, generally without any Weapons but what Providence brought to his hands: And yet we do not read that ever he went forth but he prevailed; he never Engaged, but he always Conquered, and came off Victorious, (except in the Matter of *Dalilah*, wherein he resembles not *Christ*, but a *Christian*,) in all things else he was ever successful, putting whole Armies to flight, and overthrowing the power of the *Philistines* in such a manner as gave way to *Israels* Restoration, both with respect to their Rights and Liberties. So that hence note, 1. That he finding *Israel* in so great Slavery and Bondage to the *uncircumcised Philistines*, did first restore, set free, and redeem them, both with respect to their Liberties and Laws, in Persons and Estates, making them again a free Nation. And then, 2. He did Judge, Defend and Preserve them

them in the Liberties and Rights unto which he had restored them. And all this he did in his own Person, without having any Assistance or Counsel from his Brethren: No, all he got from them, was by them to be delivered Bound into the *Philistines* hands, had not the Lord rescued him, *Judg* 15. 11, 12, 13. which was but a sad requital for the many and great Kindnesses he had done them. But he takes all patiently from them, desiring only of them, that they would not lay hands on him themselves.

And now who sees not in all this, how clearly he types forth Jesus Christ, the Heavenly and Spiritual Judge of the whole *Israel* of God, who taking up the (otherwise Lost) Cause of fallen Man, in order to the bringing about of his Restoration and Redemption, first humbles himself, and becomes like one of his Brethren, yet without sin, having both Natures in the unity of his Person; in which Person he goes forth against all the powers of Sin, Death and Hell, in the name and behalf of Man lost in the Fall, and so proclaims open War against all Powers and Principalities opposing Man's Salvation. Against whom, upon every Engagement, he still gets the victory, and comes off victorious in spite of all Oppositions, not ceasing both to proceed and prevail till he hath compleated the work of his Peoples Redemption and Salvation. And all this he doth not only in his own Person, but also in his own Power, as the Son of God; for otherwise he acknowledgeth he could do nothing, *Joh* 5. 30. (even as *Samson* without his *seven Locks* was weak, and but as another man, *Judg* 16. 17.) But Christ, as the Son of God, trod the Wine-press alone, *Ha* 63. 3. bore the Wrath and Curse of God, endured the most bitter pangs of Death, and most intolerable torments of Hell, till the Father beheld, and said he was satisfied, *Isa* 53. 11. *Mat* 17. 5. and thereby he stopped the mouth of devouring Justice, and took away by his Obedience, Passive and Active, all Power of Condemnation from the fiery Law, with respect to all New-Covenant Members; and so he ascended up on high, and led Captivity Captive, depriving Death of its Sting, and the Grave of its Victory; thereby fulfilling every Condition in the New-Covenant, whereby it is made intirely free of it self, and the Members thereby are made intirely free also in themselves, as they come actually by Faith, through true Regeneration, to be invested therein. Here note, that Christ finding his People in the Gall of Bitterness, and Bond of Iniquity; dead in Sins and Trespases; shut up under Gates of Brass, and Bars of Iron; charged with an infinite Debt, and

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for that expos'd to eternal Misery, if not immediately set free; and also insulted over by the Devil, and trampled upon by all the powers of Hell: I say, Christ, when first appearing in the Flesh, finding his Inheritance given him by the Father, *Joh. 7. 6.* thus given over to Strangers, doth first release and set them all at liberty, by paying all their Debt for them, and suing forth of the Court of Heaven a free and full Discharge in their behalf; subduing withall in due time all their Enemies both within and without, doth in the second place defend and preserve them in this liberty and heavenly freedom to which he hath restored them: And all this by virtue of his own Power and Merit, without any assistance from them either in whole or in part. Nay, He, as *Samson*, was delivered up by his Brethren, the Men of his own Nation, into the hands of heathen Infidels, to be Crucified and put to death, a sad requital to him for his kindness. Nay, further I may speak it, and you hear it with sorrow and shame, Where is the Christian who in a spiritual sense doth not again and again give Christ over, so far as lyeth in his power, to be Crucified over and over, by giving way to the Enemy to take possession of his Heart? But happy they that lay not hands upon him themselves, on purpose and in despite, for that is the unpardonable Sin. But I haste.

5thly. *SAMSON* typifies Christ in his *Marriage*. This is the Point upon which our Text treateth, we will therefore pass it by till we come to the words.

6thly. *HE* typifies Christ in his *Death*: For it is said of him, That he gave his Enemies a greater stroke, and did more execution among them at the day of his death, than he had done in all his life-time, *Judg. 16. 30.* Which is more especially true in Christ Jesus; for he gave the Powers of Hell a greater stroke at the day and hour of his Death, than he had done in all his Life-time by his Word and Miracles; for then it was that *by death he overcame him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil*, *Heb. 2. 14.* Then it was that he took away the Hand-writing of Ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, nailing it to his Cross, *Col. 2. 14.* and having spoiled Principalities and Powers, he made a Show of them, openly triumphing over them in it. Then it was, that through the Eternal Spirit he offered up himself to God without spot; whereby he became the Mediator of the New Testament, to the end, that by the means of Death, for the Redemption of the Transgressions that were under the First Covenant, they which are called might receive the

the promise of an Eternal Inheritance, *Heb. 9. 15.* Then it was that he was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him, he will appear the second time without sin unto Salvation: Blessed are all they that wait for him in sincerity.

BUT I come to the matter in hand.

AND in the first place I would note by the way four things, from the four first Verses of this Chapter, antecedent to our Text.

1st. *SAMSON's* falling in Love with a Woman in *Timnath*, a Daughter of the Philistines, (*Ver. 1.*) and from hence I observe, That as *Samson* loved this Philistine Woman, though dwelling in the House of his Enemies, and so by nature one of them; so also *Jesus Christ* loved his Church when in the House of his Enemies, viz. the fallen Estate; and not only so, but whilst she was an Enemy he laid down his Life for her, *Rom. 5. 8.*

2^{dly}. THE oppositions he met with from his Father and his Mother in the pursuit of his Desires in taking her to be his Wife, (*ver. 3.*) and hence I observe, That Persons out of a sincere Zeal, may sometimes oppose God in his most Wise and oft times various Dispensations.

3^{dly}. THE Reasons moving them so to do, (*ver. 3.*) which was, because she was a Stranger of another Nation, and uncircumcised; and the Israelites were forbidden to Marry with such by the Law, *Deut. 7. 3.* And from thence I observe, That God can turn all things, yea even sin it self, so, as that it shall conduce abundantly to his Glory and his Peoples good, benefit and advantage.

4^{thly}. I would note *Samson's* Answer to his Father and Mother when by them opposed for loving of this Daughter of the Philistines, *Get her for me, for she pleaseth me well.* And from hence I observe, 1. That as no Oppositions nor Perswasions could remove *Samson's* Affections from this Philistine Woman, so nothing, no not sin it self, could nor can ever be able to separate or remove the Love of Christ from his Church, *Jer. 31. 3. Rom. 8. 38, 39.* But contrariwise, the Love of Christ will move him to separate and remove all sin, with whatever else offends him, from her, in his own time. 2. As the want of Circumcision, and several other things required by the Law, could not prevent *Samson's* loving and marrying of this Philistine Woman, so want of inherent Qualifications, &c. cannot hinder Christ's loving and espousing of his Church to himself, *Ezek. 16. 6, 7, 8.* But contrariwise, his Love to her hath; doth, and will move him to wash

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wash and cleanse her, fit and qualifie her, renew, enrich, and adorn her so, as may render her most well-pleasing in his Eyes, *Ezek. 16. 9; 10, 11, 12, & 13.*

AND this brings me to our Text, in which I would note four things also.

1st. *SAMSON's* Journey down to *Timnath*, a City of the Philistines, and from hence take this Proposition; That as *Samson* went down to *Timnath*, a City of the Philistines, to take a Wife from thence; so Jesus Christ came down from Heaven into this sinful bewildered World to purchase Marriage, and Betroth unto himself his beloved Church and Spouse, *Hos. 2. 19. Jer. 3. 14.*

2^{dly}. HIS occasion thither, which was to Marry the Woman whom Love (notwithstanding her nonconformity to the Laws and Customs of *Israel*) had made so well-pleasing unto him. And from hence take a second Proposition, That as Love was the only impulsive or moving cause which brought *Samson* down to *Timnath* to Marry this Woman, who otherwise could not have been acceptable to, no more than she was in an Eye of reason fit, for him: so likewise meer Love was the impulsive cause which alone moved Jesus Christ to come down upon the Earth to Marry his Church unto himself, whom had she not been so loved by him, could never have otherwise been acceptable to him, being in her fallen Estate, in an eye of reason upon all accounts so unfit for him.

3^{dly}. HIS Company which went down with him, which was his Father and his Mother, he would do nothing in the case without their Company and Consent, which affords us this third Proposition, That as *Samson*, notwithstanding the ardency of his Love, would do nothing without the knowledge, advice, company and consent of his Father and Mother; so Jesus Christ in all his Proceedings in and towards his Church, did not only in all things conform to the Will of his Father, but also had the Father still present with him to bear him company, *Mat. 26. 39.* And so much was he delighted therein, that when, through excessive sorrow and trouble, he had but the least apprehension of his Fathers absence, how vehemently did he cry out, *Ely, Ely, Lama sabachthani*, i. e. *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me*, *Mat. 27. 46.* Oh happy that Man or Woman among us this day, that is thus tender on, and desirous of the Heart-enriching Soul-ravishing Love, Company and Presence of Jesus Christ.

But

But again, 4thly. LET us note the terrible opposition that *Samson* met with in his Journey, even when he came nigh to the place; so the Text, coming to the Vineyards of *Timnath*, Behold, a young Lion roared against him: Young, noting vigour and nimbleness; a young Lion, noting strength, cruelty and fierceness, a frightful Adversary indeed, especially considering how unprepared *Samson* was to an eye of reason for such an Assault; which affords us this fourth and last Proposition, viz. That as *Samson* in going about to Marry and Espouse this Woman of *Timnath*, this Daughter of the Philistines to himself, met with many oppositions, but more especially this young Lion; so Jesus Christ in endeavouring the Redemption and Espousal of his Church unto himself, hath and doth meet with many oppositions, but especially that roaring Lion the Devil, 1 Pet. 5. 8. For, 1. when he was in the Flesh in order to the Accomplishment of Mans Redemption, how often did this Lion, this Devil, set upon him, and not contenting himself with daily troubling, vexing and persecuting of him by his wicked Instruments the Jews, he first drives him into the Wilderness to tempt him there, where he deals with him as it were Hand to Fist, but still doth no good. Again, 2. He stirs up his Disciples to molest and grieve him, first Peter by his fleshly advice; hence Christ saith, *Get thee behind me Satan*, &c. Mat. 16. 23. Then, secondly, *Judas* to betray him; for saith the Text, *Satan entered into him again*. Thirdly, Peter to deny him, and that with Oaths, saying, *I know not the Man*. Oh horrible! And after all this, he again comes himself (as it were) accompanied with all the Powers of Hell to assist him, and taking him at the greatest disadvantage, even when under the heavy burden of his Fathers Wrath, according to Psal. 69. 26. as designing, if possible, at once to strike him down to Hell for ever. But blessed be God, it was not possible, &c. Joh. 14. 30. *The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me*. See then the Devils Malice, though he had nothing in Christ, yet would he not cease to afflict Christ whilst in his reach; and he carries the same mind towards Christians also, Luke 22. 31, 32. *Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as Wheat*, &c. Again, secondly, when he cometh in the Spirit, in and by the Gospel, actually to call and unite his People to himself, the Devil still ceaseth not to interrupt him in his Proceedings, if by any means he can, although in this respect he doth not directly so much fight against Christ as Christians; for he knows he can do no good with him, he long since overcame him up-

on Mount Calvary, Heb. 2. 14. By death he overcame him that hath the power of Death, even the Devil. And now seeing he can do no good on Christ the Husband, he desires to have poor Believers the Church, that he may try and sift them as Wheat. And truly, Beloved, the Devil hath put many a poor Christian hard to it, he hath made many a one cry out, *Oh what shall I do?* And I doubt not but many of you in this Congregation have met with him to your sorrow; and so by woful experience know these things I now speak to be true.

BUT to all you that are labouring in this bitter warfare and hour of tryal, this day of Jacob's trouble, let me say thus much to you, Have a care of trusting to the Arm of Flesh, and of putting confidence in Man; Have a care of selling your selves for nought, by putting confidence in that which cannot save; but consider our great *Samson* is spiritually come down in and by the Gospel, and he is among us and present with us, and if he do but as much as shew his Head or make bare his Arm in any of our Hearts and Souls, then the Devil is gone, he is fled, and though we seek him at such a time we cannot find him; and why? well, because Christ is come down to dwell with us. Oh, Sirs, could we but live more by Faith with and in Christ, we should be less troubled with the Devils Company. But I haste.

BELoved, time will not permit me to speak to all these Four Propositions thus raised from the words, I shall therefore make choice of the Fourth and last of them, for the subject of my remaining Discourse at this time, *viz.*

THAT as *Samson* in going about to Marry and Espouse this Woman of *Timnath*, this Daughter of the Philistines to himself, did meet with many Oppositions, chiefly this young Lion; so Jesus Christ in redeeming the Redemption and Espousal of his Church to himself, hath and doth meet with many Oppositions and Opposers, but especially that roaring Lion the Devil.

IN the handling of which Point, I shall observe this Method:

First, TO shew the State and Condition of Christ's Church in general, and every Member thereof in particular, before called by, and United or Married unto Jesus Christ.

Secondly, I shall consider whether the Church first seeketh unto Christ, or Christ unto the Church, in order unto the effecting of this Blessed Union or Marriage.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, MENTION some of the greatest Lets, Hindrances and Impediments, which do most interrupt this Blessed Union and Agreement betwixt Christ and his Church.

Fourthly, I shall give you some Cautions in order to a timely prevention of the dangers occasioned thereby.

And, *Lastly*, MAKE some short Application.

First, I shall shew the State and Condition of Christ's Church in general, and of every Member thereof in particular, before called by, and United or Married unto Jesus Christ : but I must be brief in the whole.

And, *First*, THE State of Christ's Church in general, and of every Member thereof in particular before called, &c. is a State of Deadness : This is plain from *Paul's* words to the Church at *Ephesus*, *Eph. 2. 1. But you hath he quickened, who were dead in sins and trespasses. See also vers. 4, & 5.* Now this deadness is two-fold : 1. A deadness to God and all Goodness : And this deadness is, 1. Absolute : And, 2. Universal. 1. Absolute, not a deadness in part, as some do vainly imagine, as if Man was partly dead, and partly alive to God by Nature : No, for Man is wholly dead, so as that there is no Spiritual Life to Heavenly things remaining in him. 2dly, It is an Universal deadness, or a deadness throughout : *Death*, saith the Apostle, *Rom. 5. 12. past upon all men, for that all have sinned* : And as it passed upon all, so it obtained a Compleat Dominion over all ; so that take an unconverted Man, that is altogether natural, and such a Man is, with respect unto God, a dead Man ; his Heart, his Will, his Mind, his Affections, together with all other Faculties of the Soul, are altogether dead, and lifeless. And, secondly, it is a deadness *in sin*, not *to sin*, for so is the truly godly, according to their measures, but a deadness *in sin* : Hence note, a natural Man thus dead in sin, is First not sensible of sin ; secondly, he is not troubled for sin ; thirdly, he is not burdened with sin ; fourthly, he hath no true desire to be delivered from sin : true, he may have some Convictions, and perhaps sometimes sharp ones too, but it is either not for sin as sin, or else but for some particular Acts of sin more notorious than ordinary ; in the mean while, not seeing that his whole Nature is polluted, and that the best of his Actions, whilst out of Christ, is but as filthy Rags, which instead of meriting any good thing for him, doth rather, like the Blood of *Abel*, cry to Heaven for vengeance upon him ; for without Christ we can do nothing, *John 15. 5. that*

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is, nothing well-pleasing to him, *for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.* O that the World could once be brought to see this ! then Men would have done talking of Free-will, and of a power in Man, whilst in Nature, to do that which is good ; then would they be brought off trusting in, depending upon, or boasting of their own Righteousness ; then should we all fall down as one Man before the Lord, crying out as with one Voice, *Oh wretched men that we are, who shall deliver us from this body of sin ?* Rom. 7. 24. Then should we know what Christ meaneth in that notable place, *John* 5. 24, 25.

But, *Secondly*, THE State of Christ's Church in general, and of every Member thereof in particular, before called by him, &c. is a State of Hardness and desperate Wickedness ; but still I mean as to the things of God : for, alas ! if the Devil tempt, if the World allure, if the Flesh lust after its own things, if any Profit, Pleasure, Honour, Preferment, or Advantage be offered to us, Oh how soon then have we an Eye to see, an Ear to hear, and an open Heart to receive these things, though tending never so much to our Souls ruine and destruction ! but on the other hand, God may call and call again, he may stand at the Door and knock day after day, he may cry aloud in our Ears by his Word, Works and Providences, he may threaten Death, Damnation and Destruction by the Law ; and again sweetly tender Grace, Mercy, Forgiveness of Sins and Salvation, by the Gospel, time after time, and in Sermon after Sermon, and yet for all this, Man, whilst in Nature, hath neither Eye to see, Ear to hear, nor Heart to receive : Oh sad Condition !

But again, *Thirdly*, THE State of Christ's Church in general, and of every Member thereof in particular, before called by Christ, &c. is a State of Blindness and Insensibility ; for though Man in this Estate lie in the Gall of Bitterness and Bond of Iniquity, chained up in the Devils Prison, where Satan himself is Gaoler, though he be in a State which if lived and dyed in, will certainly usher him into the Pit of Hell ; and though he be posting with the greatest Expedition towards everlasting Damnation, sleeping and snoring in a Condition near equivalent to the Damned in Hell, and though he hear all this from the Scriptures and God's Ministers, yet still he remains blind and insensible, till God move upon the Heart. See *Eph.* 4. 18.

But, *Fourthly*, FOR I haste, The State of the Church of Christ, and every Member thereof, whilst in Nature and uncalled, is a state
of

of Alienation from God: Alas! whilst thus, they have no true knowledge of him, nor fellowship with him, they see him not, nor enjoy him, though in him they live, move and have their Being; they rise up in the Morning, and ly down again at Night, Day after Day, Month after Month, and yet have not God in a godly way as much as once in all their thoughts; they rarely do as much as once seriously consider whether they be going, to Life or Death, to Heaven or Hell, to God or the Devil.

Fifthly, and lastly, THE State of Christ's Church in general, and every Member thereof in particular, before effectually called by Christ to himself, is a State of Deceiveableness: This *Paul* confesseth to *Titus*, *Titus* 3. 3. For, alas! generally, nay, I think I may say always, they that are most without God have the least sense of the want of God; they that are most with the Devil, are in the least fear of the Devil, and they that are really the greatest sinners, are the least troubled for their sins; for either they are wholly Carnal in their Lives as well as Hearts, and so minding no Religion at all, or else they fall a doing and working for Life, building upon their Prayers, Duties, Works and Obedience, thinking these shall stand them in some stead; concluding, that if they can but live Civilly, deal Justly, do their Duties orderly, and keep all God's Commandments to the utmost of their Power, according to the Law: Well then, undoubtedly all shall be well with them, both in Death and Judgment, and consequently to Eternity, though they know nothing, no nothing of Christ, the Gospel, Faith, nor Self-denyal; not minding that the Scripture saith, That there is *no name given under heaven whereby we can be saved*, but the name of *Jesus*; and that *whosoever believes not in him shall be damned*, for without Faith it is impossible to please him; but *Do* and *Live* is the only Religion consistent with the fallen Nature, it is wholly a stranger to all Gospel Mysteries, and so I fear are too many called Gospel Ministers, else why is Free-will and Mans works and Righteousness cry'd up at such a height at this day, to the great dishonour of Christ and the Gospel in so many places and persons? and why is there such Heart-burnings against such as preach the Pure Gospel of Christ, whereby Man and his Righteousness is laid in the Dust, and Christ and his Righteousness exalted, according to the Scriptures? But to conclude this Point, *Paul* most plainly tells us what all Men are by Nature: For indeed there is no difference. In the second of the *Ephesians*, 11, 12. 1st. Gentiles in the Flesh. 2^{ly}. Uncircumcised

in Heart. 3^{ly}. Without Christ. 4^{ly}. Aliens to the Commonwealth of Israel. 5^{ly}. Strangers to the Covenant of Grace. 6^{ly}. Void of Hope. 7^{ly}. Without God in the World : a dreadful Condition indeed ; and this brings me to the *Second Particular*.

To consider, Whether the Church first seeketh unto Christ ; or on the contrary, Christ first seeketh unto the Church, in order to the effecting of this blessed Union or Marriage betwixt them. And the Solution is plain, First, as intimated by the Text ; and 2^{ly}. As confirmed by all the Scriptures relating thereunto : 1st. As intimated by the Text, thus, *viz.* As *Samson* first sought unto, and endeavoured after this *Philistine* Woman, in order to the concluding of this Contract betwixt them, and not she unto him : So in like manner Jesus Christ first and primarily seeketh unto his Church, in order to the bringing about of this happy Union, and not she unto him. This also is plain from many Scriptures, as from the 16th. of *Ezekiel*, from the 3^d. Verse to the 14th. Where 1st. The Church lay in the open Field *polluted in her blood*. 2^{ly}. There was *no eye to pity her*. And yet, 3^{ly}. When she was in this condition, Jesus Christ in mercy came and *passed by*. And 4^{ly}. Her *time*, notwithstanding her misery and shame, was to him *a time of love*. And 5^{ly}. He did all this whilst she in her self was dead, as to any Affection towards him ; and therefore saith he, *ver. 6. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee, Live ; yea, when thou wast in thy blood, I said unto thee, Live.* See also the 2^d. of *Hosea*, where when the Church was backsliden from, and which is worse, (though always the issue of a backsliding Spirit,) hardened against him : Then he came in Mercy (though she perhaps at the first did not so look upon it) and hedged up her way with Thorns, to the end that though she pursued after her Lovers, yet that she might not overtake them, *ver. 6, 7.* 2^{dly}. He takes away all her Fulness, Joy, and Mirth, all her Delight in her own ways, and removes from her all her pleasant things, *ver. 9, 10, 11, 12.* 3^{dly}. He visits upon her all the days of her former Wickedness and Idolatry, *ver. 13.* And, 4^{thly}. After all this, he, as it were, turns Suiter to her : *For (saith he) I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and there will I speak comfortably unto her,* *ver. 14.* Alas, poor dejected, doubting Souls ! whilst God is a bringing of them into the Wilderness, or into a bewildered state, as to their own Apprehensions, are even frightened with fears and terrors, lest he should destroy them there, and give them over to perish for ever, little considering that it is God's way to

to keep his best Wine till the latter end of the Feast ; and in the Wilderness to speak most comfortably to them, giving them in the Valley of *Achor*, or Trouble, a Door of Hope ; and that there the Knot of Union is to be tied, which is never to be loosed more ; and that then they must call him no more *Baali*, viz. *My Lord*, ; but that they must henceforth call him *Ishi*, that is to say, *My Husband*, v. 16. A blessed Conclusion ! And let me tell you, There is none of you here this day that are Suiters to God, but God hath had first a great suiting of you to bring you to that. Oh ! admirable Love and Condescension ! that ever the Great God of Heaven, and Lord of Eternity, should become Suiters to such Hell-hounds as the best of us are by Nature. Again, Observe that Text in *Jer.* 3. 12, & 22. where the Lord most earnestly and compassionately suith, exhorteth and inviteth his Church, with all possible persuasions, to return from her backslidings ; for, saith he, *I am married unto you*, ver. 14. *only acknowledge your iniquities, and that you have transgressed against me* : And then, *Return, Oh backsliding Children, and I will heal your backslidings*. And indeed here the Lord not only suited, but prevailed : For mark the Answer they returned him, ver. 22, 23. *Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God, in vain is salvation looked for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains, for in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel*. The God of Heaven grant that we may return him the like Answer with Heart and Mouth, this day, and all other times wherein he by the Gospel is inviting us to come unto him. See also the words of *David*, *Psal.* 27. 8. *When thou, O Lord, saidst, Seek ye my face ; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek*. Oh dear Friends ! hath not God a long time been a suiting of you by the Gospel to come unto him ? and hath he not often called aloud of you, saying, *Seek ye my face* ? I know you cannot deny this. Well ; but let me ask, Was you ever brought to cry out with *David*, *Thy face, O Lord, will I seek* ? True, it may be you have said thus with your Mouths ; but pray note, Did your Hearts ever say so ? Saith holy *David*, *My heart said, Thy face, O Lord, will I seek*. Pray consider it. But to conclude this Point also, Mind what *John* saith in his *First Epistle*, 4. 10, & 19. *Herein is love, saith he, not that we loved God, but that he loved us* ; And we love him, because he loved us first. Alas, Beloved ! had not God loved and sought after us, till we had loved and sought after him, then had we never so much as once lifted up our Eyes towards him, till with the Rich Man we had been in Hell ; which would have been too late either to have

sought

fought after him, or looked up unto him. I might mention many more Scriptures to the like Effect, but time will not permit. Besides, these are sufficient already laid down, the sequel whereof amounts to this, That as *Samson* first fought unto this Woman of *Timnath*, this Daughter of the Philistines, notwithstanding her Non-conformity to the Religion and Laws of *Israel*, and not she unto him: So Jesus Christ seeketh unto his Church in true Heavenly and Divine Love, and not she unto him, notwithstanding, not only her Nonconformity to, but also her Enmity against the Religion and Laws of his Kingdom, as she lyeth in Nature, and when he thus first applyeth himself unto her.

AND from hence I inferr,

FIRST, That Christ in seeking after, and calling of his People to himself, hath no respect to Antecedent Qualifications in them, for he knows better than we, the impossibility that a bitter Fountain should yield sweet Water, or a bad Tree bring forth good Fruit: Therefore saith he to the Pharisees, *Oh generation of Vipers, how can ye being evil, do that, or as the word is, speak that which is good, for out of the abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh*, Mat. 12. 34. But a Blind Man will not believe this, because he is Blind, and cannot see nor understand the Truth: But saith *Calvin*, "Whatsoever a Man thinketh, purposeth or doth, before he be reconciled to God by Faith in Christ, is accursed; and not only of no value to righteousness, but of certain deserving to Damnation: *Institut.* pag. 370. And saith *Luther*, "Whosoever goeth about to please God with works done before Faith, goeth about to please God with Sin, which (saith he) is nothing else, but to heap Sin upon Sin, mock God, and to provoke him to Wrath: O that men would once consider these things!

SECONDLY, From hence I inferr, That though the Church of Christ in general, and every Member thereof in particular, be brought by Sin through the Fall into a lost Estate, which, as was before observed, is a State of Deadness, Hardness, Blindness and Alienation from God; yet there is a time wherein he will gather and call them all home to himself. There was a time in which *Samson* went down to *Timnath*, to take this Daughter of the Philistines to Wife: And accordingly there is a Time wherein God will gather his Elect from the four Winds of the Heavens: There is a Time for every one of Gods Jewels to be gathered into his Treasure, and for every one of his Sheep to be brought into his Fold;

Fold; tho' God's People be born in Sin, He will not have them to dye so: for there is a time, wherein *I saith the Lord will call her Beloved that was not Beloved.* And this hath the Father appointed, *Eph. 1. 10. That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on Earth, even in him.* And, beloved, this time shall assuredly come upon every Soul belonging to God: the Lord stir up our Hearts to look for it, for *except we be converted and born again, we can never enter into the Kingdom of God.* An uncalled State is therefore a dreadful State, for while a Man is so, he knows not whether he belong to God or no: But certainly such a one may conclude, that for the present he belongs unto the Devil, the Lord awaken all such.

THIRDLY, From hence I would inferr, That God must condescend and come down to us, (which indeed he hath done both in Flesh and Spirit) before we can ascend to him. So *Samson* went down to *Timmath.* A Man whilst in Nature, and so consequently dead in Sin, is no more able truly and sincerely to ascend up to God, either in Affection, Faith or Practice, than a Stone to lift up it self into the Air, or a Bird to flye which hath no wings: What could the *dry Bones* do, which the Lord saith was the House of *Israel*, till the Spirit of the Lord came upon them? *Ezek. 37.* What cause then hath every Soul amongst us to be humble before the Lord, and to be abased in our own Eyes, and to cry out with *David, Psal. 115. 1. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name be praise!* and with *Paul, 1 Cor. 4. 7. What have we that we have not received?* And with *Isaiah, Chapter 26. 12. Thou, O Lord hast wrought all our works in us!* But many Professors at this day suppose a possibility of setting up Christ too high, and of laying Man down too low in himself: But how this cometh to pass I could never yet understand: sure I am there is a great deal of both Possibility and Danger of setting up Man and his Righteousness too high, and thereby disesteeming of Christ, and his precious Death and Merits: never was there less reason to cry up Mans Works and Obedience, (I mean so as to boast thereof, or depend thereupon) than at this day, in which they are (I may speak it with sorrow) so little practised. But were but the Free Grace of God, Christ Jesus, and Faith in him duly exalted, and freely preached in Life and Power, it would I think be the only way, truly and without Hypocrisie, to reform Mens Lives, and to
work

work their Hearts into a godly sorrow, which would issue in it true and evangelical Repentance never to be repented of ; but there being so much Legality among Professors at this day, hath undoubtedly been a great occasion of so much lukewarmness in the World in Matters of Religion.

BUT I come to the Third Particular ; viz.

TO mention some of the greatest Lets, Hindrances and Impediments which do most interrupt this blessed Union and Agreement betwixt Christ and his Church ; which indeed are many, but time will but permit me to mention some few.

AND the first main Let or Hinderance, is the want of a thorough sight, and a true sense of the Miserableness of the condition in which we are by Nature ; and accordingly an enjoyment of rest and satisfaction, though both false and Soul-destructive in that condition. And thus much even Nature it self teacheth, That no Man will seek unto a Physician for a cure, unless he be first sensible that he is troubled with such a Distemper as doth necessarily call for, and require such a Cure : And who knows not, that even the best of us are a great deal more ready and forward to encline to, and seek after the Benefit and Cure of the Body, than the Benefit and Cure of the Soul ; insomuch that a Man of whom I have heard, who deserting and forsaking the Work of the Ministry, in which he had spent much labour and travel, to take up the Practice of Physick ; and being asked the reason why ? He returned this Answer, *Because* (said he) *I saw People were a great deal more careful of their Bodies than of their Souls, and much more free to lay out their Money and Pains for the one than the other.* And Christ himself tells us, *That the whole need not a Physician, but they that are sick.* The reason therefore why Christ, our great Physician of Souls, is so much slighted, is because so few are sensible of their Souls Maladies and Distempers.

AND the case is the same in the Point in hand ; for the main reason why poor Sinners are no more free to change their Estate, to forsake their first Husband, viz. the Devil, and the World, and to be joyned and married to Jesus Christ, is because they see not the danger and misery which they lye in and under, in the Condition in which they are.

A SECOND Let or Hinderance in this Matter, is Persons being so much in Love with their present States, and the Pleasures and Profits which, as they suppose, they enjoy therein. For the proof of this, see that Place in *Matth. 22.* at the beginning: Where the Text tells us, That a great King (*i. e.*) God, made a Marriage for his Son, (*i. e.*) Christ; and sent forth his Servants to call them that were bidden to the Wedding. But what saith the Text? Well, they would not come. Again he sent forth other Servants to tell them that all things were ready; This was not only to invite, but also to perswade: But what saith the Text? *Ver. 5.* Well, They did not only refuse to come, but they also made light of it, and went their ways, one to his Farm, and another to his Merchandise. Alas, their Purles were full, they had Riches enough at home; they knew not that they were wretched, poor, blind, miserable and naked, *Rev. 3. 17.* Yet it is not the bare having of the World, and the Things thereof, that hinders; but it is the inordinate loving thereof. This is that which spoils all: In *1 Tim. 6. 10.* The Apostle tells us, That the Love of Money is the root of all Evil. Mark it; It is not the Money it self; for the Creature is good; but the inordinate Love of it, this is the root of all Evil. Therefore, pray, mind what our Lord saith, *Luke 14. 26.* If any man come to me, and hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren, and Sisters; yea, and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple. That is, Whosoever pretendeth to come to Christ, and hateth not all these things, with what else can be named besides Christ, in comparison of, or in competition with Christ, cannot be his Disciple, and then for certain, not his Spouse. Oh Beloved, many keep a great stir about Sin being the main Let in the way of Union betwixt Christ and a poor Soul; but, I tell you, it is not Sin, but the Love of Sin, that separateth betwixt Christ and the Soul. See *Rev. 22. 15.* Whosoever loveth and maketh a Lye, is cast out of the Holy City; not he that barely maketh a Lye, through weakness, or by reason of Temptation; but he that not only doth so, but also loveth to do so; this is the Man of the Lord's Anger. Therefore, saith David, *If I delight in Sin, God will not hear my voice.* This therefore is the main Let in our way of Union with Christ, because we Love Sin, and love the World, together with the Pleasures and Profits thereof; we love the Flesh, and we love our Lusts, our Selves, our Works, and our own Righteousness; and therefore we cannot love Christ. And further, provided that we should hate Swearing and Drunkenness, and yet love Pride and Covetousness, this is nothing; or if we should hate Pride and Covetousness, and yet love

Deceit and Hypocrysie, we are still no better : This is but as it were, to change one Devil for another, and so keep a Devil still. But I cannot enlarge.

THE Third Let in our way of Union with Christ, which I shall now mention, is want of Faith in Christ. And truly, Beloved, this is a great Mountain in our way ; indeed this is the *Hydra*, the Monster-Sin, *Unbelief* ; for as there is nothing impossible to him that believes, so there is nothing possible to him that believes not : For as Faith hath the preheminance above all other Graces, so Unbelief hath the preheminance of all other Vices. And how many a poor Soul is there that is both sensible of, troubled for, and burthened with Sin, and also feels a want of, longs for, and desires to be with Christ, and yet hath little or no Union with Christ, by reason of Unbelief? Yea, there are many that are weary of the World, weary of Sin, weary of the Devil, and of themselves too, accounting in their very hearts all things nothing in comparison of Christ, and yet for all this, have little or no Fellowship with Christ, because of the want of Faith. Oh, therefore this want of Faith is a great Soul-plague ; it is as the Devil's Castle, and Tower of Defence, from whence he shooteth so many Darts at the Souls of the Afflicted. The Lord in Mercy arm us all against this Unbelief. And truly, my Friends, there is no reason for the persons before spoken of, to doubt of God's favour, of all persons in the World ; for all the free and blessed Promises in the Gospel run with a direct tendency to and upon them : I beseech you therefore, if there be any such here this day, that you would take courage, trust in God, and doubt no more ; and the Lord give and grant you Hearts thus to do ; for I know there is no such precious Herb as Faith is, grows in the corrupted Garden of Mans Heart by Nature. But oh you proud, obdurate and hard-hearted ones, whose hearts the Lord never yet touched, nor who never yet trembled at Gods Words ; to you be it spoken, the Dread ought to lie at your doors ; for there is not a Curse written in all Gods Book, but it runs with a direct tendency to and upon you, as little as you fear it, think of it, or are troubled for it now ; yet the Day is a coming, even at the Door, when you shall be made to know it : The Lord God give you hearts to see it in due time, before it be too late, and the Offers of Grace be hid from your Eyes. But there is at this day a sort of Professors of Christianity in the world, who pretend to Faith and a holy Life, or rather first a holy Life, and then Faith, as they suppose ; and these are still crying, Do, do, do ; and upon doing, they pronounce Men blessed, happy and safe ; not regarding in the mean while, whether

such

such have any Faith or no; or if they have, whether it be rightly founded upon Christ or no, without leaning to, or depending upon any thing else, especially in point of Justification: But oh that such Persons would seriously consider, 1. That Man, as Man, and whilst out of Christ, can do nothing: So saith Christ himself, *Without me ye can do nothing*, John 14. 5. But the strongest Argument that ever I met with, to convince me of the truth of this, is recorded in John 5. 30. Where Christ saith thus; *I can of mine own self do nothing*: And from hence I infer, That if the sinless, spotless, and only Son of God, did acknowledge, That he could of his own self do nothing, that is, as he was Man, &c. then is it most high Presumption for a poor mortal, sinful, wretched Creature, Dust and Ashes, to say or think, that of himself, as separate from the Grace, Power and Goodness of God in Christ, he can do any thing; that is, any thing acceptable or well-pleasing to God. 2. Let them consider, that *whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin*, Rom. 14. 23. And also, that *without Faith it is impossible to please God*, Heb. 11. 6. And lastly, Let them consider, that *Faith is the Gift of God*, Eph. 2. 8. and a *Fruit of the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 22. And if so, then, pray, what is sinful Man in and of himself, but a poor, lost, helpless, nothing, undone Creature: And this must man be made to see, before ever he can truly close with Christ Jesus in Truth and Sincerity. And when once he comes thus to be stript of all, and made nothing in himself, then is he a fit Object of Mercy, in which God once coming to work Faith in the heart, in order to an embracing of Christ, then a blessed Union betwixt Christ and the Soul is immediately brought forth.

BUT, Fourthly and lastly, For I cannot stand to mention any more Particulars; Another dreadful and most mighty Let in this way of Union betwixt Christ and his Church, is the Devil; of whom it is said in another case, and may accordingly be said in this; *He that now letteth, will let, until he be taken out of the way*, 2 Thes. 2. 7. And indeed it is him, which the young Lion in our Text doth most directly point at; for as the young Lion roared against Samson, when he came down to Timnath, to take this Daughter of the Philistines to Wife, so the Devil roared against Christ, both when he came in the Flesh, to purchase and redeem his Church; and also as he cometh in the Spirit, to call and sanctifie his Church, in order to the betrothing of her unto himself in an everlasting Oneness: But at the former of these, to wit, his coming in the Flesh, the Matter in hand doth seem more directly to point; for in the latter, to wit, Man's Calling and Conversion, as in-

Samson a Type of Christ.

deed all a Christians Life-time, after really made a Christian; the Devil doth not so directly strive against Christ, as I said before, as poor Christians; for he despairs of ever doing good of him, who hath already led him captive, and appointed him his Bounds, saying, *Hitherto shalt thou go, and no further*; But *Oh*, saith he, *let me have a turn with Christian Man*; I once overcame Man when sinless in Paradise, and perhaps I may do so again, though he be made sinless in Christ, Luke 22. 31, 32. But alas, poor Satan is mistaken; for Christians have now Christ to defend them, and to fight their Battels for them, which Adam in Paradise had not; and therefore, as Christians, not so easily drawn to sin, that is, to sin with delight, as he did: And again, provided they do sin still, they have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the Propitiation for their sins: But however, many a poor Christian is many times hard put to it by the Devil; for it is not in vain that Peter exhorteth to be sober and watchful, because the Devil went about as a roaring Lion, seeking whom he might devour, 1 Pet. 5. 8. For Peter knew by woful experience, how hard a thing it was to resist and withstand him. And indeed this is one main Reason why the righteous are said to be scarcely saved, 1 Pet. 4. 18. And see but at your leisure what dreadful War he made against the Church in Revelat. 12. And what Joy the Saints made in Heaven, ver. 10. when he was cast from thence. But why do I thus numerate Scriptures? I will appeal to all your Experiences, that know anything of God. And Beloved, let me ask you, Do you not find this Devil, this Dog of Hell, do you not find him, I say, tempting, tossing and turning you over and over, to and again? Do you not find him larking in every corner you come in; and laying Snares in every thing you meddle with? Do you not find him rising up and lying down with you, going to Bed and Board with you, in Light and Darkness, Day and Night still with you? And for sure he designs you no Good; it is your dear and precious Souls he still aims at: The Lord deliver us all from his hands.

But perhaps you will say, Alas we know by most woful experience, that all these things are true, and that we are daily thus troubled with the Devil upon all Accounts; but oh, how shall we do to withstand and overcome him?

I Answer, If you would stand against, and be saved from the Devil, then flee from, and renounce your selves, as well as him; for if Self be kept alive in your Bosomes, the Devil will not be far from thence. Both sinful and righteous Self must be put off, if once Jesus Christ

Christ be rightly put on. And pray Sirs, further, have an eye to the Son of God, our great *Samson*, who is come down in and by the Gospel into our Philistine Land, to marry us, notwithstanding the uncircumcision of our Hearts and Natures, to himself; who, though thou canst put no Power, Goodness, Merits, nor Deserts as a Weapon into his Hand, will yet notwithstanding, by his own Almighty Power tear Satan in pieces like a Kid, in his own time, as *Paul* told the *Romans*, Chap. 16. 20. *The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. Believe in the Lord your God, so shall you be established,* 2 Chron. 20. 20.

I might now come to shew you some of the principal Ways, Means and Methods which Satan takes, and makes use of, in order to the disturbing, molesting, and if it were possible, hindering of this happy Union betwixt Christ and Christians; but Time not permitting, I must pass that, and so come to the Fourth Thing premised from the general Proposition, viz. To give you some Cautions, in order to a timely prevention of the Dangers occasioned by the aforesaid Lets; and they are these that follow: And first, To the Righteous.

CAUTION 1. And to such, I say, First, Have a care; That after God in some measure hath come in upon your Hearts, and that you have had, as you suppose, some Tastes of this heavenly Union; and are brought not only to see your selves to be in Death and Darkness by Nature; but also, through Mercy, to be brought into the Land of the Living, by Grace; and have seen the *Day dawn, the Shadows flee away, and the Day-Star of Grace arise in your hearts*, so as that you have been made to say, *The Winter is past, the Rain is over and gone, the Flowers appear on the Earth, the time of the singing of Birds is come, and the voice of the Turtle is heard in my Soul, saying, Arise my Love, my Dove, my fair One, and come away:* I say, have a care, that after all this, the Devil meet you not, and rob you of your first Love: God is oftentimes pleased to permit Satan to try his Children, Rev. 2. 10. *The Devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried.* And be sure the Devil will run at long Rope, he will strain his Commission to the utmost, to do you a Mischief; and tender Grapes are soon spoiled: And I know the Devil will often assault you that are in this condition, with these, or the like Temptations; *Oh Soul, wilt thou be saying, now thy Troubles are over, and thy Dangers past, thy Darkness is fled away, and Light from Heaven is broken in upon thee; thou needest*

est: therefore, to take no further care; it is not possible that thou shouldst err or miscarry; thou maist now sit still, and take thine ease; for the time of thy prosperity is come; thou shalt sit as a Widow, full of sorrow no longer; therefore take Courage, (and surely well thou maist;) for what is it that God requires in his Word, that thou hast not done? thou hast mourned, prayed, repented, believed, and reformed; and is not this enough? God is none such a hard Master: Lift up thine Eyes therefore, behold the World is before thee; Is there never an Object in it well-pleasing to thee? What needest thou be so precise? Dost thou not read of a Gospel-Liberty? Thou maist safely endeavour after, and delight in the lawful things of this World, and yet take no harm; witness many great and approved Professors that do the same.

BUT Beloved, have a care of these and the like Temptations; for as they are of and from the Devil, so they tend to your Souls ruin and destruction: It was the great Fault of the *Galatians*, that they began in the Spirit, and ended in the Flesh; and it will be no less fault in you: And truly Saints are not distressed and troubled for a while, that to afterwards they may live again to the World and to themselves; that is but a counterfeit Conversion: But alas, we see too many Examples of this nature, at this day in the World; many set forth fair for Heaven, in all outward appearance, for a while, and yet afterwards wither and dry away: The Lord make all these Examples as so many awakening, warning Caveats to us, to be the more watchful; for though all sleep till the Bridegroom's Voice be heard, yet woe to them that sleep afterwards: Oh the many Evils occasioned by a lukewarm Spirit! Who is able to express them? But in a word, Lukewarmness, if it prevail, setteth open a door, forth at which all present Enjoyments of God take their Flight, and in at which Satan, Sin, Death and Darknes come in. And truly, when once it comes to this, the Face of Heaven looks black upon such a Soul: Therefore I beg of you all that hear me this day, have a care of a lukewarm Spirit.

CAUTION 2. Again Secondly, If you find God delivering you from this dangerous Rock of Lukewarmness, directing your Feet from this dreadful Path, which directly leadeth down to the Pit, so as that Satan can do no good of you here: Then have a care on the other hand, of splitting your selves upon the no less dangerous Rock of Hypocrisy and Self-conceitdness. And to prevent this,

1st. SEE

1st. SEE that you be found in the Faith, especially in the great Article of Justification: 1. Holding Justification by Faith. 2. And that not Subjectively, but Objectively; not as a bare Act in us, but as Beholding, Receiving, Embracing and applying of Jesus Christ, according to that clear and most precious Text, *Acts 13. 39. And by him all that do believe, are justified from all things, &c. And,*

2^{ly}. BE careful to live Holily, and as careful to do it sincerely, the Grace of God inforceth Holiness, but hateth Hypocrisie: and that you may do this, 1st. See that you expect not that Holiness should bring you to Christ, but that you should derive Holiness from Christ, being by Faith Primarily brought unto him. 2^{ly}. That the performance of good Duties moveth not God to give his Grace to you, but his Grace first given to you, and wrought in you, moveth you to perform good Duties, if you do them aright.

3^{ly}. THINK not that your love to God or to Goodness, doth produce love to God towards you, which was not in him before; but contrariwise, that God's Love to you manifested and revealed in you, produceth and begetteth love in you, both to God, Goodness, and Good Men; nay, to your very Enemies. But Oh wherewith shall it be lamented, that this Godly Love, which always produceth Christian Unity, is so much wanting at this day among professors. But,

4^{ly}. IN all your Holy Actings, do not, as it were, Act for Life, or that you may receive Life; but on the other hand Act as from Life already received from Christ by Faith, and revealed and wrought in your Hearts by the Spirit.

LASTLY, Be not puffed up with, or by, any thing that you do, have done, or can do. Oh forget it! look over it, take Christ's Advice; let not the left Hand know what the right Hand doth; and when you have done whatsoever is commanded you, still account your selves *unprofitable servants, Luke 17. 10.* And be sure you hold fast the Foundation and Corner stone, Christ Jesus, and bring nothing as a Ground of your Faith into the presence, and before the Face of God, but Christ and him alone. Oh observe the words of *Luther* upon his Dying Bed, which are said to be his last words! Says he, *Christ have I loved,*

I loved, Christ have I feared, Christ have I served, Christ have I preached, in Christ have I believed, and unto Christ I commend my Soul. Beloved, here was a Blessed end; here was a Comfortable and Glorious End: The Lord bring us all to such an End for his Names sake. And would you come to such an end? then beware of Hypocrisie. But I haste. A word or two more of Caution to the Wicked, and so I come to the Application.

AND in the first place, if there be any Persons among us this day, that are Ignorant of, and Strangers to God, and his workings upon the Souls of his People, and that are mindless and regardless of God, Christ, the Gospel, Heaven, and their Souls Salvation, living either in desperate Wickedness, Moral Civility, or Legal Holiness, and yet without God; Well, to all such I would say, Oh have a care, have a care how you dally away your precious time! Consider your Souls lie at stake, and if you miss of Christ you are undone for ever; remember the Rich Man, *Luke 16.* who never lift up his Eyes till he was in Hell. Oh examine before hand, what you will do upon your Dying Beds, when you must take your Leave of Friends and Relations, go off the Stage of this World, and pass into endless Eternity. Beloved, pray mind me, there is as it were two great Porters, if I may so speak, which stand beside the Gates of Death, *viz.* Christ and the Devil; Christ as it were on the right hand, and the Devil on the left, and when the Soul of a Righteous Man passes the Gates of Death, Christ, whose everlasting Arms are still spread under all his, with open Heart and Hand, is there ready to receive him, and will not suffer Satan as much as once to come nigh him, but will say, *No, Satan, the time of this Souls warfare is accomplished; thou hast had thy time to try and sift him, and hast caused him to feel many a bitter hour of Trouble, but I who long since bought him, have saved him from thy Hands, and will now receive him to Glory, where thou shalt never trouble him more; for precious to the Lord are the Deaths of all his Saints, and Blessed are the Dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, for they rest from their Labours, Trouble and Toil.* But on the other hand, when a Wicked Unbeliever dyes, and comes to pass the Gates of Death, presently he falls into the Jaws of the Dog of Hell, *i.e.* the Devil, and is caught in the Arms of Satan, and so hurried down into Eternal Flames; and if he cry, *Lord, save me; No,* saith Christ, *for in thy Life time thou contemnedst my Grace and Gospel, and cast off my Counsel and Reproof, thou set light by my Death and Merits, and* would

would have none of my Salvation, I will therefore now Laugh at thy Calamities, and mock when thy Fear cometh; Depart thou from me, O thou Worker of Iniquity.

O consider this, all you that forget God, and while it is called to day, and while the Door of the Bride-grooms Chamber standeth open, hear, fear and lay it to heart, return to the Lord, accept of Grace, and embrace those things that belong to your Peace, before they be hid from your eyes: For the Devil designs nothing more, than to draw you on with one Temptation or another, in Blindness and Forgetfulness of God, till Death hath closed up your Eyes; and then he knows well enough that Hell shall close its Mouth on your Souls: if you miss of Christ, you miss of Heaven for ever.

A G A I N, Secondly, Beware that upon your turning from your evil ways, you do not close with a false Faith in an unsound way of Religion; for it will be a sad thing if you talk your selves to Hell with heavenly Words, or go to Death and Judgment with a Lie in your right-hand. But may be you will say, *But how shall I turn aright?* I answer, I shall direct you to the Lord's own counsel, Jer. 4. 1. *If thou wilt return, O Israel, (saith the Lord) return unto me.* Mind the words, *Return unto me*: It is not enough to turn to this or that Man's particular Way or Form, nor to join to this or that Congregation, though never so pure and Apostolical; neither is it enough to turn from a vain and sinful, to a good and godly Life; from Vices to Vertues, from evil and wicked Works, to an outwardly, holy and righteous Conversation, though all these are good in their places, and always certain Adjuncts of true Christianity, and evermore Concomitants of true Faith in all that are truly godly, so far as possible.

B U T the Root of the Matter lyes in this; a sincere and godly turning to the Lord; I say, To the Lord; and a closing in the first place with Jesus Christ, by Faith, as our Mediator, Advocate, and only Saviour; as our King, Priest, and Prophet; as our Head, Lord, King, and Husband, for ever. Taking him as of God, he is made over to us, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption; believing that he hath bought us, and paid our Debt for us; that he hath acquitted us from Sin, the Law, Curse, Death and Hell; and that by him we are accepted of, and justified before God Almighty; and that our Sins are laid upon him, and his

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Righteousness imputed to us by God the Father, according to that golden Text, 2 Cor. 5. 21. *He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him* : And that now henceforward we must not live unto our selves, but unto him that hath redeemed us, and died for us ; and that we must fear him, and serve him ; not as Slaves, but as Sons ; not for Rewards, but of a ready Mind, accounting it as our Meat and Drink to do the Will of God, according to his Word, knowing that a Free-will Offering is only acceptable unto God. These things I commend to your Consideration ; I would enlarge further, but that time calls for a Conclusion. However take a few words of Application.

AND first of all, by way of Examination. And because we are upon a Matter of very great Importance, I desire we may all be faithful to our own Souls herein. The several Particulars which I shall commend to your Consideration, by way of Examination, are these following.

FIRST, Pray let us examine, Whether *Samson* be come down to *Timnath* ? I mean, Whether Christ Jesus be come home to our Hearts ? Whether he hath given an awakening and an effectual Call, in and by the Gospel, to our Souls, *which hath brought us out of darkness into his marvellous light ; and out of the Kingdom and Territories of Satan, Death, and Hell, into the Kingdom of his dear Son ?*

O B J E C T. But may be you will say, *But how shall I know it ?*

A N S W. To which I Answer, by these three following Marks :

FIRST, If *Samson* be come down to *Timnath* ; if Christ be come home upon your Hearts, to call your Souls home to himself, as aforesaid, then hath he given you a true sight and a sense of your *Philistine* Condition ; of your Uncircumcised Estate, which you are in by Nature : A true sight of which doth chiefly consist in these five things. 1st. In being brought to see your selves to be the chief of Sinners, even as *Paul*, 1 Tim. 1. 15. 2^{ly}. In being brought to see the exceeding sinfulness of this Sin wherewith you are thus polluted, Rom. 7. 15. 3^{ly}. In being made truly sensible of the dreadful Curse with the which the Law threatens you for, and because of this sin and sinfulness, Gal. 3. 10. 4^{ly}. In being accordingly made sensible of your own insufficiency,

sufficiency, by any worth or merit in your own selves, to satisfy for the Sin, or deliver from the Curse, whereof you are guilty, and with the which you are attended whilst you are in this condition. 3/y. In being brought to see at what an infinite distance you stand from God in this Estate; and consequently to see how far you are, 1st. From Reconciliation with God; and, 2/y. Of the Certainty of your Damnation, if you be not reconciled unto God.

SECONDLY, A *Second* Mark is this: If Christ hath called you to himself, *out of darkness, into his most glorious light*; then as he hath let you see an insufficiency in yourselves to save your selves, so he hath let you see an All-sufficiency in himself, whereby you are brought to understand, that though you be wholly lost in your selves, yet that there is a full and absolute possibility of your being both redeemed and saved in and by Jesus Christ; so that despairing in the first place of all power, peace and safety without Christ, you may be brought wholly and alone to confide in Christ for the same: And this is a sure and most happy Condition, and I beseech you be serious in the Examination of it.

AND, *Lastly*, The Third and last Mark is this: If Christ hath called you home to himself, as aforesaid; then are your selves become a burthen to your selves, and you find your greatest Enemies to be them of your own House, which makes you call and cry day and hour unto the Lord your God to help, uphold and strengthen you against Self, and all its Assistants; that so being freed from the same, you may be given up wholly to Christ Jesus, both in Faith and Practice; which is a Condition most desirable to all true Christians, though God knows too many Professors at this day are strangers to the same.

SECONDLY, A *Second* thing which I would have you to examine, is, Whether this *young Lion*, the great Opposer of Christ, *viz.* Satan, be destroyed and slain, yea or no?

OBJECT. But may be you will say, *How shall I know that?*

ANSW. If this *young Lion* be slain; I mean, If Satan be overcome in and upon your account, then you may know it in some measure by these following things.

FIRST, If Satan be thus overcome, then you are made sensible that it was not you, but another upon your account, that did thus

overcome him, even Christ Jesus; and so consequently, that not to you, but to him belongs all the Glory for evermore.

SECONDLY, If Satan be thus overcome by Christ Jesus, in you, and for you, then are you abundantly troubled for that you can no more love, and give Praise to Christ Jesus for the same; for Beloved, I am very much satisfied, that it is one of the greatest Troubles that a true Child of God meets withall, even because he finds himself no more forward in loving and praising of Jesus Christ for all his Gifts, Favours and Mercies: Yea, and truly I hope there is some among us this day, whose Minds and Spirits have been greatly burthened many a time, because they could deny themselves no more, and esteem of Christ no better in Matters of this nature: And pray note it, It is a good sign of a Christian, in whomsoever these Thoughts do reside; for Self-Love, Pride, and Spiritual Ambition, is of all things most contrary to God, and destructive to Godliness.

BUT, *Thirdly and Lastly*, If Satan be thus overcome in you, and upon your account; then are you in some degree united and married to Jesus Christ.

OBJECT. But may be you will say, *But how shall I know whether I be so Married to Jesus Christ or no?*

ANSW. To which I answer: If you be Married to Jesus Christ, then it will appear in these following things.

FIRST, You will have a higher Esteem of Jesus Christ, than of any thing else whatsoever: Yea, he will be to you *the chiefest among ten thousand; even altogether lovely*; so that you will be brought to think *one day in his Courts* better spent than a *thousand* elsewhere.

SECONDLY, You will think every hour a lost hour, that is not spent in the fellowship of his Love, and enjoyment of his Presence; yea, and often will you be bewailing your selves, that you have spent so much time without the same; crying out unto God after this manner, and saying, O Lord, how many a day and hour have I spent in wickedness and vanity, without either seeing or enjoying thee! O my God! which now occasions abundance of trouble to my Soul, even when I consider it.

THIRDLY, You will think your selves Losers by all things you receive, in which you receive not Christ Jesus. Then it will not satisfy you to have Lands and Livings, Gold and Silver, Wife and
 Chil-

Children, unless you have Christ too : Neither will it satisfy you to enjoy Gospel-Priviledges, and Gracious Opportunities, unless you enjoy and possess Jesus Christ in all and every of those things ; for no Wife that sincerely loveth her Husband, doth ever account her self happy in the enjoyment of any thing wherein she doth not enjoy her Husband ; even so in like manner God's dear Children are not content with any thing that they do possess or enjoy, wherein they do not possess and enjoy Jesus Christ : And Oh, Sirs ! let me freely speak it, these Persons are not content with Gifts, no, not with heavenly Gifts, without the Giver. Do they come to hear Sermons ? still they are searching for God's Power and Presence in and under the same, or else they are not contented. Do they Pray, Read, or Receive the Sacraments ? Well, still it is the same ; all things without God are nothing in their esteem.

FOURTHLY, If you be thus Married to Jesus Christ, then are you soon aware of any thing that doth interpose betwixt Christ and your Souls ; yea, if a Cloud do but come over the Face of the Sun of Righteousness, so as to darken the Glorious Light thereof in your Souls, then are you quickly sensible of it. And if that this Cloud remain upon the Face of the Son of God, Christ Jesus, so as that Spiritual Darknes do long continue in and upon your Souls, O how often are you then enquiring, and saying, Oh why doth he hide his Face from me ! and why is his Chariot-wheels so long in coming !

FIFTHLY, If you be thus Married and United to Jesus Christ our Spiritual *Samson*, you are very Earnest in the promoting of Christ's Glory. O when you hear Persons giving Glory to fleshly Wisdom, Humane Learning, Natural Abilities, Morall Civility, or any thing of the like Nature, which seemeth to lessen or derogate from the Glory of Christ Jesus, O how near doth this come home to your Heart ; for better a great deal a true Christian endure to hear themselves laid low, and trampled in the Dust ; yea, and accounted as bad, nay worse than nothing, than to hear Jesus Christ abused and set below his place ; O this cuts them to the very Heart !

SIXTHLY, If thou be Married to Jesus Christ, then it is thy Hearts desire to walk in all his Ways, and in all things to conform to his Will and Pleasure. A Tender and Loving Wife taketh more pleasure in doing and observing her Husbands Will and Pleasure than her own : So in like manner Christ's Church and People

ple do most heartily desire to do Christs Will ; yea, and account it as their meat and drink to do the same.

SEVENTHLY and lastly, If thou be married to Jesus Christ, then art thou oftentimes in Great Trouble that thou canst keep no more faithful and true to him than thou dost ; yea and how often art thou taking occasion, from the observation of thy own weakness and proneness to backslide from God, to detest and abhorre thy self, to lay thy hand upon thy mouth, to admire Gods unspeakable Love, and to cry out with the Church in the *Lamentations*, Ch. 3.22. *It is of the Lords mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.* And hence it cometh to pass that the continual Cry of thy Soul is, *Not unto me, not unto me, but unto Samson, even Christ my Lord and Husband, be all the praise and glory for ever and ever.*

MANY more things I might propose to your Consideration, to be Examined by you, but time being spent I omit them, and shall only add two words more, and so draw to a Conclusion. And the first word is by way of Terror to the Wicked, who neither are Married, nor desirous to be Married to Jesus Christ. And the Second is by way of Comfort, to all such as apprehending themselves to live in the Land of the *Philistines*, afar off from God, do long, breath, groan, pray, and most earnestly desire to be brought nearer to, and wholly joyned with Jesus Christ as their Lord and Husband.

I begin with the first, viz. such as neither are Married nor desirous to be married to Jesus Christ : And to all such I say, that it had been better for them that they had never been born, than that they should live and dye without Jesus Christ ; better had it been, that their bodily Eyes had never seen the Sun in the Firmament, than that their Souls Eyes should not see the Son of God in the Gospel : Better had it been that such had never had a being in this World, than that they should have an Eternal being without Christ in another World : O Dear Friends, I would be plain with you, and pray mind what I say, *As the Tree falls, so it lyes* ; no Conversion in the Grave. True, the Grave may be as a Bed to rest in, but it will not, it cannot be as a Shop to Trade in. Therefore let Old and Young, Rich and Poor, that hear me this day, be advised to turn to Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. And Sirs, if you do but come by a true and sincere Faith to lay hold on Jesus Christ in Sincerity, fear not but it shall be well with you

you to Eternity. And in your turning to God, beware of this, That your outward Appearance as to Lives and Conversations, do not go before or without your Hearts and inward Inclinations: And further, have a care of seeking after God in another way than he himself hath appointed. Consider, that not in the way of Works, but in the way of Faith we are to meet with, live and walk with Jesus Christ, for *the Just shall live by Faith*. And pray note it, it is *not every one that cries Lord, Lord, that shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; because all that profess the Name of Christ, have not Hearts endued with sincere Love to Christ; and I must tell you, that a sanctified Heart is better than a Silver Tongue, and a heart full of Grace is much better than a head full of Notion. And certain it is, that you may pretend to be Gods Servants, when you are not his Sons; but undoubtedly, if you be his Sons you will be his Servants, not by constraint, or for Rewards, but most freely, and with a ready mind: And one word further I desire to commend to you, and I desire you to observe it: A Man may seem a Christian, and not be so: but if a Man be a Christian, he must of necessity seem so.

AND so I come to the last Use, which is a word of Comfort to all such, as apprehending themselves to live in the Land of the Philistines, I mean afar off from God, do long, breath, groan, pray, and most earnestly desire to be brought nearer to, yea, and wholly to be joyned with Jesus Christ, as their Lord and Husband: And to all such I would say, fear not, for your Redeemer liveth, and the most holy One of *Israel* will be your Refuge. He that is the God of Glory, and that inhabits Eternity, can and will help all that love him, fear him, trust in him, and depend upon him.

O B J. But perhaps thou wilt say, True, I desire, yea and that with all my Heart, so far as I know it, to be made one with, and Married unto Jesus Christ: But the Devil, this roaring Lyon, of whom you have spoken, doth so withstand and oppose me herein, that I am afraid that what I desire herein can never be effected: Surely never poor Soul was so tempted with, and oppressed by Satan as I am.

T O which I Answer, Poor Soul, thou feelest no Mans burthen but thy own, neither doth Satans Temptations to another trouble thee, but do but thou ask another in thy Condition, and he will tell thee that he is tempted even by Satan as thou—But may be thou wilt say, But I think there is none in such a Condition as I am. To
which

which I answer, Why, what a State art thou in? Well, perhaps thou wilt say, First, I am full of Sin, and sinful pollutions, and so consequently more abominable in my self than a Toad: So that when I come before Christ Jesus to beg Mercy and Acceptance, alas, I see that I deserve none. And besides, when I come I have almost always the Devil to bear me Company, on purpose to prevent my embracing of, and being joyned unto Jesus Christ, and therefore surely never Person was in my Condition: To which I answer, Alas poor Soul, thou art quite mistaken, for there is not a true Christian, but is in the same Condition less or more, yea, I my self could tell thee the same Story, and much more; yea, and that by woful Experience: But however, for thy better satisfaction I shall commend to thee an Example from the Scripture. See *Zech. 3. 1, 2, 3.* and note it well; saith the Prophet there, *He (speaking of God) shewed me Joshua the High Priest standing before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan stood at his right hand to resist him: And saith the Text, Joshua was clothed with filthy Garments, and stood before the Angel.* — Now Joshua in this place is a Figure of the Church, and the Angel of Christ. The Text therefore teacheth us thus much, That when the whole Church in general, or any Member in particular, do come before Jesus Christ, in order to Justification and Salvation in and by him, then and at that time they come clad with filthy Garments, so undeserving of acceptance; and also have the Devil to bear them company, in order to the preventing of their either joyning with or confiding in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Husband, accordingly as thou sayst of thy self, so thou art not alone in this Condition: But pray mind how *Joshuah* in this Estate was freed, rescued and delivered both from his filthy Garments, and also from the Devil: See the third and fourth verses. Christ first rebuked Satan, and then caused *Joshua's* filthy Garments to be taken away, cloathing him himself with changes of Raiment; and as he did to *Joshua*, so will he do to thee, if thou believe but in him. But perhaps thou wilt say, Nay, but I am Poor, Barren and Unfruitful: I answer, Even so do all God's People judge themselves to be; they are crying out of their Leanness daily and hourly, and think with and of themselves, That they do nothing for God; but though they think thus of themselves, yet God thinks otherwise. And indeed this I have observed over and over, That the Godly have still such low Thoughts of themselves, and are base in their own Eyes; whereas the wicked, on the other hand, are proud and

lifted

lifted up, and have high thoughts of themselves; and it seems by our Saviours Words, That both the Righteous and the Wicked will have the same thoughts each of themselves at the Judgment-day. See *Mat. 25.* from 31. to the end, where first he tells the Righteous, That they had fed him, cloathed and visited him, &c. But they cry out, *Lord, when did we so and so?* Alas! they took no notice of their good doings: Well, but Christ did. Oh blessed Professors! it is to be feared there is too few such at this day; for most are looking upon what they are, have, know, and do; and Oh! this spoils Religion, puffs up with Pride, and undoes the Soul. But the Righteous cry out, *When saw we thee hungry, sick, or in Prison, and did these things unto thee?* But now mark when he turns him to the Wicked, saying, *I was so and so, and yet ye did not such and such things unto me:* They answer, *Lord, when saw we thee so and so, and did not these things unto thee?* Alas! Blind Souls, they had deluded themselves with the doing of this and that all their Life time, when as they had done nothing in God's account; forasmuch as they had not Believed on the only begotten Son of God; for not Doing but Believing brings the Soul to Jesus, and so to Truth and Holiness in and by him. Oh that Professors would seriously weigh these things! But, alas! few do. But however, when the Lord shall pour forth more of his Spirit according to his Promise, upon his People, then shall they be brought to this.

AND now, Dear Friends, Time and Strength being gone, I shall conclude, commending you to our Heavenly *Samson*, even to him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the Face of our Fathers Glory, with exceeding Joy: To whom be ascribed endless Praise through Infinite Ages. *Amen.*

CONSIDER what you have heard, and the Lord give you Understanding in all things.

FINIS.

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